



BOSTON'S JEWISH COMMUNITY DAY SCHOOL
בית ספר יהודי קהילתי

5th Grade
Curriculum Overview
תכנית הלימודים בכיתת תמר

תשפ"ג / 2022-2023

קהילה כיתתית – Classroom Community / Kehillah

Middot v'Derekh Eretz- מידות ודרך ארץ : Values and Conduct

We learn from Midrash that דרך ארץ קדמה לתורה, Derekh eretz kadma l'Torah, the path of proper conduct, precedes the study of Torah. (Vayikra Rabbah Ch. 9). We recognize that if derekh eretz precedes the study of Torah, then derekh eretz must precede all studies. We, at JCDS, commit ourselves to a social curriculum based on מידות middot, (the active expression of Jewish ethical values) to go hand-in-hand with our academic learning. We continually discuss and implement practices that support the mission of JCDS and enable each student and adult to learn and achieve in a safe and joyful environment. We use the *Facing History and Ourselves* (FHAO) curriculum to embed core learning principles of Intellectual Rigor, Ethical Reflection, Emotional Engagement, and Civic Agency into our JCDS Middle School curriculum. In addition to incorporating FHAO content into our curriculum, we draw regularly on its best practices techniques, as Facing History is not just about what we teach, but how we teach it. The standard Facing History curriculum is a journey in five parts.

1. The Individual and Society focuses “on how both individual and national identities are formed, as well as how these identities influence behavior and decision-making.”
2. We and They focuses on national and collective identity and the way in which membership in a group can connect people to each other and create a sense of connection and belonging, but membership can also exclude and create misunderstanding and conflict between groups.
3. Choosing to Participate brings everything together by helping students see how understanding the past can and does connect with the present. Students realize that through their actions and choices, they have the ability to change history.

We also enhance our social-emotional curriculum through Open Circle, a program based out of Wellesley College. Open Circle emphasizes the central role relationships play in social development and academic success of children. By learning the social competencies necessary to make and maintain new and diverse relationships with classmates, children create new avenues for their own and other's growth.

Throughout the year in Tamar, we emphasize the great importance of creating a kehillah (classroom community) in which all members feel safe and valued. In the course of class discussions, we often articulate what it means to treat one another with kindness and respect. We also work toward fostering independence and social and academic self-advocacy to ensure that students feel empowered to express themselves appropriately.

T'FILLAH at JCDS - תפילה ב

תפילה-T'fillah-prayer is integral to JCDS' pluralistic education and is one of the ways we provide a common grounding in Jewish practice and values. It expresses our core identity as a living, celebrating Jewish community. In our T'fillot (prayer services), we seek both to sustain one another and to reach beyond ourselves. JCDS is committed to being a safe space for students (and the whole community) to explore and grow into our particular beliefs and understandings. For all of us, T'fillah is a setting in which our community can join in song, contemplation, growing mastery, and deepening commitment. JCDS continues to make an intentional effort to deepen ruach (spirit) and kavanah (intention/focus) in t'fillah.

T'fillah in Middle School

Students have the opportunity for T'fillah every day though the service and grouping varies:

Monday: Communal shacharit service in Beit K'nesset, with monthly alternative minyan breakout options and a communal Torah Service

Tuesday: Optional Shacharit in the morning. Traditional Minha (the Afternoon Service) in Beit K'nesset or Guided Minha Meditation.

Wednesday: T'fillah Electives (see below)

Thursday: Communal Shacharit with 4th Grade in the Beit K'nesset. This service combines interactive discussions about t'fillah with the sharpening of t'fillah skills.

Friday: Optional Shacharit in the morning. Whole school Kabbalat Shabbat closes out our week with song, stories, and connection.

There is a rotation among the Middle School advisories for handing out the honor and responsibility of leading in the Minyan each week so that students gain practice in the skill of leading and so they have the opportunity to find their own voice as leaders and Torah readers.

Seating in our Minyanim is mixed (boys and girls together), though we do occasionally conduct communal services with a "tri-chitza" – an arrangement with mixed and separate seating.

Students who feel uncomfortable praying in a mixed-seating setting are welcome to pray in an area on one side of the room. With regard to *Shlichut Tzibbur* (leading others in prayer) and the Torah service, our (flexible) standard is egalitarian. We ask that boys and some girls wear Tallit and T'fillin as they and their families choose. In addition, our head-covering policy requires that students follow their family's custom when deciding if and how to cover one's head in the Beit K'nesset.

T'fillah Electives: Middle School students can seek out and express their own path in our Wednesday mornings T'fillah Elective Minyanim. Choices vary from term to term and have included Nigunim (singing), Coding T'fillah, Jewish art, Dramatizing T'fillot, Photography, Jewish Feminism Discussion, Moral Dilemma discussion, T'fillah with Gan Nitzan, Yoga, Cooking the Parasha (Torah Portion), and Teva (Nature) T'fillah.

In-school B'nei Mitzvah Celebrations: Students reach and mark their Bar/Bat/B Mitzvah in Middle School. JCDS has a longstanding practice of inviting parents, teachers, and classmates to honor the Bar or Bat Mitzvah student with a modest ceremony during Monday or Thursday T'fillot in the week prior to the observance with his or her home community.

Parents are always welcome to join our Middle School T'fillah on Mondays and Thursdays.

עברית - HEBREW

Maayan Lipiner and Yafit Kfir

The Proficiency Approach to Hebrew acquisition provides students with the tools that support JCDS' mission to "nurture the whole child and enable each child to reach his or her highest potential." Our Hebrew curricular model is based on a sophisticated understanding of second language acquisition which allows teachers the flexibility they need to differentiate their instruction to meet the needs of all students. One key component of the program is the assessment tool that measures each learner's ability to function using meaningful Hebrew and real life communication. The data we collect from students' work, and our understanding of each student's learning profile, enables us to adjust the instruction and articulate specific goals for each student.

עברית בכיתה ה' – Hebrew in Grades Five

Beginning in 5th grade, students are divided into Novice, Intermediate and Advanced proficiency groupings which mirror the language of native Israeli speakers. Students are able to move among these groups within a given school year as their progress indicates. Each lesson strives to maximize the balance between learning new aspects of the language and practicing being in a 'simulated' real- life environment students may find themselves in outside the classroom.

Thematic units:

- 1) Tishrei, חגי תשרי Autumn, Place, משפחה מיוחדת Unique Family, סדר יום Routines
- 2) A new page מקום A place, מדינה בהתחלה Building a State

HUMANITIES- מדעי החברה

Avi Minder

Fifth Grade Humanities is taught as a combination Social Science and English course. We will explore the connections between geography, society, politics, economics, religion/belief systems, and technology to bridge students' knowledge of different subjects and develop their cultural literacy. Some of the literature is chosen to accompany and enhance the history content, while

other pieces are selected because they lend themselves beautifully to the goals of close, inquisitive reading. Much of the writing in fifth grade is done in response to reading.

Both our literature studies and our study of an ancient civilization are guided by the following essential questions and subquestions:

- **How can learning about the past help us create a better present and future?**
- **What is power and how does a society's governmental structure reflect its views about power?**
 - What are the society's government structures?
 - How does the government structure change?
 - How did people gain and lose power?
- **How does geography affect the people who live there?**
 - Where do we find groups of people on the map?
 - What are the geographical features of the location?
 - Where are the major physical features and nations of Africa located?
 - How do physical features impact the people of Africa?
- **What is culture and how does understanding it help us appreciate that society?**
 - What were their belief systems?
 - Where do we see evidence of this society today?

מדעי החברה - Social Science

The JCDS Social Science curriculum is informed by the Massachusetts History and Social Science Curriculum Framework, which identifies four main areas of social science education: history, geography, government and civics, and economics. Each of these areas will be explored through the study of Ancient African Kingdoms and a comprehensive unit focusing on refugees and immigrants.

- **Geography:** By the end of the year most students should be able to read, analyze and create a variety of maps. They will also be able to make predictions and come to conclusions about why a civilization lived the way they did based on their geographical location and resources.
- **History:** Students will explore Ancient African Kingdoms and explore the history of different countries connected to historical fiction texts being read in the refugee/immigration unit. For example, while reading *Letters From Cuba*, students will read about the story of a young Jewish girl, Esther, who flees Poland in 1938 and settles in Cuba. Characters in the book come from different countries, religious backgrounds, races, ethnicities, and social classes.
- **Government and Civics:** An investigation of the type of government(s) will be included in each unit of study. Using *Newsela* as a resource, we will also gain knowledge about

the modern day geography of the region and current events in the areas. In addition, the critical skills of summarizing, note-taking, determining importance, synthesis, and organization of ideas will be taught as part of our social science curriculum.

אנגלית English

The fifth grade expository literature and a few narrative selections were chosen to accompany and enhance the social science content. As we read these texts, students will deepen their skills of determining important ideas, synthesizing information, making inferences, asking higher-order thinking questions, and monitoring their own comprehension through written expression and class discourse.

Each novel that is read during the fifth grade year has a connection to one or more of the essential questions listed above. They also provide capable platforms on which to explore key reading skills. In addition to reading comprehension of both explicit and implicit ideas, some literary elements that are the foci of fifth grade literature studies are figurative language, in depth study of characterization, and critical analysis of the text. This year the texts we will use include but are not limited to *Because of Mr. Terupt* by Rob Buyea, *Home of the Brave* by Katherine Applegate, *Letters From Cuba* by Ruth Behar and *Nowhere Boy* by Katherine Marsh.

Writing is taught using the EmPOWER system (developed by *Architects for Learning*). This structure provides students with self-talk tools and clear strategies - from idea formation to essay generation - for writing that serve them in any writing assignment they encounter. Much of the students' writing in fifth is in response to reading. Each reading response targets both a content goal (e.g. comprehending the events in the text) and a skill goal (e.g. visualizing a passage while reading). Students will also engage in expository writing in two formats: a research paper and literary analyses.

Word Study, Spelling, Grammar and Mechanics:

By the end of the fifth grade, students will have an understanding of sentence structure, including capital letters and end marks. We will also study paragraph formation in depth and we will work on syntax within the context of our various writing assignments. Grammar will be taught both separate from, and along with, classroom writing. Spelling instruction will be individualized based on student needs, but will mostly focus on homophones and frequently misspelled words.

TANAKH – תנ"ך

Andrea Siltan

Sefer Bemidbar/Yehoshua

In the book of Bamidbar, we meet Bnei Yisrael at the beginning of the 14th month after they have left Mitzrayim. We will travel with them through the desert as they encounter physical and spiritual difficulties, and we will try to understand as they grapple with their faith in G-d and their fear of the unknown. We will witness the transformation of the people from a group of ex-slaves into an Am Kadosh. We will try to understand what it means to be a leader as we learn about Moshe, the scouts, Korach, and the reactions of Bnei Yisrael to these individuals. We will continue our study of leadership and the development of an Am Kadosh as we follow the new generation into Canaan in the Book of Yehoshua.

Goals:

- To solidify Hebrew text skills and encourage students to attempt to become independent readers of Hebrew text
- To be able to read and understand selected Rashi texts
- To advance text skills so that students are able to understand inferences, predictions, and interpretations in the text
- To begin to see the many layers of thought and ideas inherent in the text
- To empathize with the characters in the text
- To understand the use of midrash as a means of interpretation
- To relate the ideas, values, and concepts in the text to our lives today-understanding that the Tanakh is a living, breathing book that helps us understand how to live our lives and gives us a place to turn to help us make choices and decisions
- To use 21st century skills to work together

Text Skills:

- Continued progress in reading Hebrew only text, using prefixes, suffixes and root words to analyze text Increased Tanakh vocabulary
- Ability to analyze and understand verb formations
- Ability to read and understand simple Rashi

Content, Concepts, and Values:

Bemidbar:

- Census of Israelites Setting up the camp
- Forming a society-pillars of cloud and fire, shofar
- Establishment of a governing body
- Establishing a nation, establishing order and organization Law, justice and the governance necessary to form a nation
- Kohanim and Leviim
- Birkat Kohanim
- Pesach Sheini
- Establishing ourselves as an Am Kadosh-the laws, values and principles

- The complaints of Bnai Yisrael
- The meaning of trust in God and its difficulties
- Miriam's and Aaron's sins and punishment
- The Scouts Balak and Balaam
- The power of speech
- Our responsibility in the use of speech
- Truth and lies
- The importance of perspective
- The consequences of our actions-especially in the use of speech
- Korach
- What it means to be part of a group or nation-being a team member
- Moshe's sin
- Appointment of Yehoshua-the transfer of power and the establishment of an Am Kadosh with the second generation
- The importance of the transfer of leadership

Yehoshua:

- The leadership of Yehoshua
- The importance of the transfer of leadership
- The difficulties of being a leader
- Crossing the Jordan
- The symbolism of the water crossing
- The importance of physical space to the establishment of a nation
- Conquest of Jericho
- Conquest by military versus non-military means
- Conquest and establishment of Canaan relative to God's original promises to Avraham
- Trust in God

Methodology:

- In-class discussion
- In class text work-individually, in chevruta, and as a class
- Projects (Building the Machaneh, skits about sections of text, creating modern blessings)

Assessment:

- Class Participation -I encourage and invite all students to participate and watch for those who may not be so inclined in order to help them find a comfortable way to join the discussion
- Questions sheets and exit tickets
- Projects using specific rubrics
- In class one on one check ins

TOSHBA – תושב"ע

Ari Ebstein

In this class, students are introduced to Toshba, the Oral Torah. Through a study of selections from the Mishna, we will study what Oral Torah is, how it developed, and why it is important to us as the Jewish people.

The overall theme in the course is that the Oral Torah helped to clarify, explain, and organize the laws in the Torah, and that the Mishna in particular was instrumental in shaping the Judaism that we know today. We will focus on *Seder Moed* (the section of the Mishna that deals with holidays,) especially as particular holidays approach, as well as *Pirkei Avot* (Ethics of our Fathers, a timeless section of Mishna which contains wisdom for ethical living), and *Masechet Brachot*, which teaches us Jewish blessings and how to live a life full of appreciation..

Throughout our study of Mishna, we will practice asking the questions of *How* and *Why*, we will build skills for studying together in *chevruta*, learning pairs, and we will learn how to disagree constructively.

As the 5th Grade course is an introduction to Oral Torah, the students begin to develop an understanding of Rabbinic language and logic. The students start learning how to access Mishnaic texts by seeing how they're organized, identifying a Mishna's topic, looking for key root words, and noticing *makhlokets*, differing opinions, in the text. Among the modalities we employ in 5th grade are structured text study, writing, art, music and drama.

MATHEMATICS - מתמטיקה

Maya Clarke

Following the JCDS Math Scope and Sequence, each grade K-8 has specific core topics: skills and dispositions upon which they focus during the year. The scope and sequence also identifies topics and skills that teachers introduce and begin to develop in preparation for more intensive instruction and proficiency at later grades.

We recognize that children develop their mathematical abilities at different ages. We are also committed to identifying materials that meet the needs of the different learning styles of individuals. Teachers use a variety of resources to match the learning styles and needs of their students when teaching a particular math concept or skill. They include materials that challenge students to deepen their mathematical thinking.

Our work is based on the following directives outlined by the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM) in Curriculum Focal Points, A Quest for Coherence (CFP):

- Selecting a significant number of mathematical “targets” for each grade level

- Creating a logical sequence that connects with mathematics in earlier and later grades
- Identifying those concepts of topics that “fit” with what is known about learning mathematics
- Questioning if the concept of topic is “mathematically important, both for further study in mathematics and for use in application in and outside of school.”

The outcome of this philosophy to teaching mathematics is that the curriculum “can provide students with a connected, coherent, ever-expanding body of mathematical knowledge and ways of thinking...” (p.1 CFP).

We use The *Investigations 3* (TERC) Curriculum which “is a focused, coherent, and rigorous K-5 mathematics curriculum. Fully aligned to the content and practice standards of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), deep and careful attention is paid to mathematics content and to student thinking and understanding. Making sense of mathematics is the heart of the work, for students.”

The students are engaging in activities that allow them to discover mathematical concepts on their own through the use of puzzles and manipulatives. They also discuss their thinking and reasoning with their peers while working on problem solving.

MULTIPLICATION AND DIVISION 1

- Solve 2-digit by 2-digit multiplication problems efficiently.
- Solve division problems with 1-digit and 2-digit divisors.
- Use the order of operations to solve computation problems.

3-D GEOMETRY AND MEASUREMENT

- Find the volume of rectangular prisms, including the use of volume formulas.
- Find the volume of a solid composed of two rectangular prisms.
- Use standard units to measure volume.

RATIONAL NUMBERS 1: ADDITION AND SUBTRACTION

- Find equivalents and compare fractions.
- Adding and subtracting fractions.
- Adding and subtracting mixed numbers.

MULTIPLICATION AND DIVISION 2

- Solving multiplication problems fluently.
- Solving division problems efficiently.
- Using the operations

ANALYZING PATTERNS AND RULES

- Reading and constructing coordinate graphs.

- Modeling situations with mathematics: Graphs, ordered pairs, tables, and symbolic notation
- Analyzing and comparing mathematical patterns and relationships

RATIONAL NUMBERS 2: ADDITION AND SUBTRACTION

- Understanding the meaning of decimals
- Comparing decimals
- Adding and subtracting decimals

RATIONAL NUMBERS 3: MULTIPLICATION AND DIVISION

- Multiplying and dividing fractions, mixed numbers, and whole numbers
- Interpreting fractions as division
- Multiplying with decimals
- Dividing with decimals
- Converting measurements

2-D GEOMETRY AND MEASUREMENT

- Classifying two-dimensional figures
- Analyzing numerical patterns in the perimeters and areas of related rectangles

SCIENCE- 5772

Anna Martinez

Beginning in 3rd grade at JCDS, the fields of Science and Engineering become integrated as often as possible. In all Science classes, students learn the processes and goals of these two different but related fields through hands-on and student-driven project-based learning strategies. Each year, student scientists strive to achieve the following:

- Apply the scientific process to test questions
- Apply the scientific method to gather information, imagine solutions, plan, create, test and gather data, analyze results, and improve their designs.

The goal of our Science program is to explore the world around us with a focus on topics of interest and urgency to young people. We teach students to view themselves as scientists, and to reflect on the relationship between JCDS' Habits of Heart and Mind and their innate curiosity, ingenuity, and creativity. Students explore their surroundings, make and record observations, acquire arrays of data, make predictions, test hypotheses, and support their theories with evidence. Our student scientists are guided on proper utilization techniques of the materials they use in experimentation and will learn how to properly craft their own experiments. A critical component of Science instruction is the discourse among our young scientists as they share,

clarify, and argue their findings and thinking using evidence.

The JCDS Science Program is equally focused on guiding students to an understanding of important scientific concepts, as well as providing students with opportunities to engage in scientific inquiry, especially in relation to current events. As defined by the National Science Education Standards, scientific inquiry refers to the diverse ways in which scientists study the natural world and propose explanations based on the evidence derived from their work. Students will meet for Science on Tuesdays and Thursdays in the lab; each class is 45 minutes.

Throughout the year, students will be assessed in a multitude of ways, including, but not limited to: periodic 'check-in' assessments, observations during labs, level of involvement in-class discussion, and independent and team project creation.

In **5th grade Science**, by the end of the year, most students will be able to:

- Explain major systems of the body (nervous, respiratory, cardiovascular, digestive, skeletal, and skin) as well as their primary functions.
- Collect, interpret, and communicate data. This is directly related to the practice and internalization of the scientific method. This will require application of the following skills: observe, communicate, record, predict, measure and infer.
- Distinguish between categories of and types of energy, learn about the difference between kinetic and potential energy and form a conclusion about which renewable energy source (wind, solar, geothermal, biomass, hydroelectric, or tidal) is superior to the rest.
- Build and present a persuasive argument using research-based evidence.
- Understand the connections between the study of earth's surface, fossils, erosion, ocean movement and waves.
- Illustrate and describe the flow of matter through an ecosystem and think critically about the role of pollinators within the web of life.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION – התעמלות וחינוך גופני

Laura Ball, Athletic Director

The goals of the physical education program are to focus on self-esteem, cooperation, skill development, and fitness. The activities featured in class are designed to give students maximum involvement as well as to help develop their physical, social and mental skills. These goals are obtained through a well-balanced program. The creation of an atmosphere of trust is essential to the success of each class. Each student develops a sense of belonging and a feeling of security. This enables students to take risks to learn new skills, improve old ones and acquire self-confidence and self-fulfillment. Each child receives recognition for his or her achievement and feels a sense of accomplishment.

Goals for each component include Cooperative Team Building Activities:

- Working together towards a common goal
- Understanding and appreciating each person's role in a group activity and helping each person succeed;
- Taking risks to try all the roles in a given activity. Sports and Team games
- Understanding rules and proper play of individual sports
- Gaining skills in particular sports and team games
- Playing as part of a team. Fitness and Personal Wellbeing
- Learning the needs of different body parts in order to keep fit and healthy
- Learn particular fitness and conditioning exercises that will help keep one's body fit and healthy.

Grades 3-5 Overview

Focus: Demonstrate understanding of units and activities connected with the units (rules and objectives) Key concept:

Teamwork Skills:

- body awareness
- object control
- working with others and demonstrating personal and social conduct used in physical activity settings

By the end of fifth grade most students will be able to perform the following skills:

Locomotor and non-locomotor skills:

- running while dodging
- bending and swaying
- pushing and pulling
- throwing and catching
- kicking with a partner
- stretching and rhythmic movement
- change of direction in mid-movement

Skills performed over an extended period of time

- Refining manipulative skills Throwing, Catching, Kicking, Dribbling o Volleying performed on different parts of the body
- Dynamic and static balance
- Balance on apparatus

- Stop movement and Continual movement Fitness
- Identify physical changes that result from participation in a variety of physical activities
- Explain the benefits of physical fitness o Identify major behaviors that contribute to wellness

ART- אמנות

Vered Singer

Overview The JCDS Art Program exposes children to different mediums and art techniques. Students are encouraged to use their own creative expression through experimentation and exploration. Our primary goal is to help the students appreciate the joy of the art and the artistic process!

The foundation for the art program centers on acquainting students with various classical and contemporary artists and their works*. We also integrate Jewish traditions into the art rendered and familiarize students with different artistic motifs. Consistent with JCDS's mission of providing a bilingual education, art is taught predominantly in Hebrew.

Learning Expectations:

By the end of the school year, most students will develop an aesthetic awareness, be able to create an aesthetic art form, develop self-expression and creativity through the arts, feel sufficiently comfortable expressing themselves through art. They will gain familiarization with different artists and their works

Students will:

- Become familiar with different artists, their style, and their work
- Become familiar with the period in which their art was done
- Interpret and extract meaning from artistic works
- Learn the basic concepts of the artistic works through reading, observation, and discussion
- Become familiar with the use of colors and know basic art terminology.

Familiarization with Different Materials and Media

Students will:

- Work with watercolor, oil pastels, tempera paints, colored pencils, charcoal, ink, crayons, and markers
- Work with different types of textured papers including, but not limited to: crepe paper, tissue paper, corrugated cardboard, construction paper, sketch paper, and newspaper
- Apply the use of different materials including, but not limited to: plaster of Paris, clay, copper, fabric, yarn, Styrofoam, and sponge

Art and the Jewish and Israeli Holidays

Students will become familiar with common symbols of the Jewish tradition and with Jewish artistic techniques such as paper cutting, embroidery, weaving, and etching.

Artist of the Year by Class

This year, Fifth Grade students will do an in-depth study of **Georgia O'Keeffe's** life, technique, and style. We will focus on her paintings, looking carefully at motif and composition, and examine and discuss foreground and background colors chosen.



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As well, we participate in **Facing History and Ourselves (FHAO)**, and we integrate FHAO's embedded core learning principles of *Intellectual Rigor, Ethical Reflection, Emotional Engagement*, and *Civic Agency* into our JCDS Middle School curriculum. In addition to incorporating FHAO content into our curriculum, we draw regularly on its best practices techniques, as Facing History is not just about *what* we teach, but *how* we teach it.

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T'FILLAH at JCDS- תפילה ב

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עברית - HEBREW

Maayan Lipiner, Avital Fux, Alla Shimron

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language acquisition which allows teachers the flexibility they need to differentiate their instruction to meet the needs of all students. One key component of the program is the assessment tool that measures each learner's ability to function using meaningful Hebrew and real life communication. The data we collect from students' work, and our understanding of each student's learning profile, enables us to adjust the instruction and articulate specific goals for each student.

Beginning in 5th grade, students are divided into Novice, Intermediate and Advanced proficiency groupings which mirror the language of native Israeli speakers. Students are able to move among these groups within a given school year as their progress indicates. Each lesson strives to maximize the balance between learning new aspects of the language and practicing being in a 'simulated' real- life environment students may find themselves in outside the classroom.

Thematic units:

- 1- The Last Witness העד האחרון (Remembrance) זכור (Place) מקום (Summer vacation) החופש הגדול -1
- 2- (The Rainbow Girl) "ילדת הקשת בענן" (Remembrance) זכור (Place) מקום (Summer vacation) החופש הגדול -2
- 3- (A week in my life) שבוע בחיי (Neighborhood) סביבת מגורים (Family Tree) עץ המשפחה -3

Social Studies- מדעי החברה **Josh Mocle**

The JCDS Social Studies curriculum is informed by the Massachusetts History and Social Science Curriculum Framework, which identifies four main areas of social science education: history, geography, government and civics, and economics.

This year, we will focus primarily on civics, geography, and economics through the essential question of "How does the world work and what is my place in it?" This breaks down into sub-questions such as...

- "How does land affect people and how do people affect the land?"
- "What role does climate play in determining our health and wellbeing?"
- "How did modern day governments come to be and what role did average citizens play in that process?"
- "How and to what extent do economic systems impact our everyday lives?"

In studying Contemporary Geography, students will navigate a variety of maps to learn the principles of cartography and navigation, as well as investigate present ongoing global issues such as climate change and the global supply chain. Our civics content stems largely from iCivics, a fantastic civic education organization founded by Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor. Our work will focus largely on what communal leadership looks like at different levels of government and what it truly means to "serve the people."

In addition, the critical Social Studies skills (but also life skills) of summarizing, note-taking, determining importance, synthesis, research, source evaluation, and organization will be explicitly taught as part of our work.

אנגלית-English

Avi Minder

Sixth grade English is taught as separate but linked to Social Studies. We have chosen books that serve to accompany and enhance the Social Studies content—to make it come alive and have relevance in students’ lives. We have also chosen books that relate to our interdisciplinary Project Based Learning work with Social Studies and Tanakh, in which we will explore the essential question “what is a just society?”. The novels, short stories and poems that we read this year will illustrate, using both fact and fiction, how contemporary issues of identity, justice, and belonging ‘look’ in different settings and societies. As we read, students will deepen their skills of determining important ideas, synthesizing information, making inferences, asking higher-order thinking questions, and monitoring their own comprehension through written expression and class discourse. This year the texts we will use include but are not limited to *The Giver* by Lois Lowry, *Brave* by Svetlana Chmakova, *Life As We Knew It* by Susan Beth Pfeffer, *Turtle Boy* by M. Evan Wolkenstein, and *Shooting Kabul* by N. H. Senzai.

Much of students’ writing is in response to reading. Classes often begin with a “warm up” by students writing in their journals or online. This may take the form of responding to a prompt, a poem, an image, or a quotation—something to focus and center them while building stamina in writing and thinking. We will focus on several genres of writing, including expository, narrative, creative, autobiographical, and literary analysis.

Word Study, Spelling, Grammar and Mechanics

Following an informal spelling assessment, students will focus on standard spellings of high-frequency words. They will continue to develop an understanding of parts of speech, word patterns and exceptions and narrative structures. In addition, we will begin formal vocabulary study based on words taken from our various readings.

By the end of the sixth grade, students will have a full understanding of sentence structure, including capital letters and end marks. As well, we will study paragraph formation and work on syntax within the context of our various writing assignments. Grammar will be taught both separate from, and along with, classroom writing.

תנ"ך-TANAKH

Andrea Silton

Sefer D’varim/Shoftim

Content, Concepts, and Values:

Together, we will listen to Moshe's voice in the month before he dies. He knows he cannot enter the land with the nation, and he wants to make sure that they remember his teaching and bring it with them. We will analyze what he chooses to retell, how, and why. Moshe is passing his legacy to the new generation, just as they students are preparing to enter Jewish adulthood and become the latest link in the chain of Jewish tradition.

Dvarim

Eleh Dvarim

This book is Moshe's voice-what he thinks is important for the nation as they enter the land and begin a future that he cannot share

The importance of stories as a means of the transfer of culture and values from one generation to the next

The transfer and acceptance of legacy from one generation to another

The transfer of leadership to Yehoshua, The appointment of Judges

Facing change, the importance of the transfer of leadership

Moshe's plea

Accountability, the consequences of our actions

The Scouts

The importance of speech, the consequences of lashon hara, and motzi shem ra

The Ten Commandments, The Shema

The importance of law

Different categories of mitzvot

The values of the aseret hadibrot (honoring parents, family, God, establishing the basis for a nation)

Shabbat, Tefillin, Mezuzah, the laws of the Shema

The death of Moshe

Moshe's response to his own death

Panim el panim-(our own personal) relationship to God

The cycles of life

Jewish laws and values in death and mourning

Shoftim

After the death of Joshua, The cycle of the Book of Shoftim

The importance of the transfer of memory, values and culture from generation to generation

The leadership of the Shoftim-Deborah, Gideon, Shimshon

Personal accountability

The consequences of our actions

The choices of our ancestors and influence us today

Peer pressure is difficult to resist

Faith in G-d is sometimes hard to maintain

The importance of leadership and government

Goals:

To solidify the ability to be independent readers of Hebrew text
 To read and use Rashi as one way of explaining and understanding text
 To understand the varied and multifaceted interpretations of text
 To distinguish Pshat (literal meaning) from Drash (interpretive meaning)
 To use interpretations and commentaries to support ideas and views of text
 To empathize with the characters in the text
 To relate the ideas, values and concepts in the text to our lives today-understanding that the Tanakh is a living, breathing book that helps us understand how to live our lives and gives us a place to turn to help us to make choices and decisions

Methodologies:

In class reading, discussions, debates, plays, projects and presentations using specific, structured rubrics
 Essay on Moshe as a leader, using textual evidence

TOSHBA- תושב"ע

Noah Westreich

The driving goal of the Toshba curriculum is to make students aware they are recipients of the oral tradition and are vital links in the chain of transmission. In the middle school at JCDS students devote three classes per week to the study of Toshba, an acronym for torah sheb'al peh, "Oral Torah." Selected mishnayot are the focus of study in Toshba classes in grades 5, 6, and 7 and revolve around themes both seasonally and personally relevant to the students and the community. In their Toshba classes students sharpen their analytical skills by engaging with each other in chavruta (small group learning partnerships) and shiur, the engaging lecture and discussion accompanying their learning. During havruta and in shiur students build skills and strengthen their inquisitive thinking by means of reading commentaries, learning the Hebrew words and their roots, answering discussion questions, and articulating their own personal vantage point.

Purpose of Toshba:

- Understand that there are sources of information about Jewish practice and values in texts besides Tanakh.
- Develop habits of mind which help to build analytical skills.
- Learn material via bekiut (broad strokes learning) and iyun (inquisitive analysis).
- Gain a vision of the breadth of a Jewish life and appreciate how our tradition imbues each stage with meaning and purpose.

Core 6th Grade Toshba Texts:

- Chagei Tishrei (M. Rosh Hashanah, Yoma, and Sukkah)
- The Return of Lost Items (M. Bava Kamma)
- Interpersonal damages (M. Bava Kamma)
- The stubborn & rebellious child (Mishnah Sanhedrin)

- And more...

MATH - מתמטיקה

Ya'ara David and Sarah Langer

Our JCDS program is following the Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for Mathematics adopted by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education in March 2017. The 2017 Framework continues to concentrate on fewer topics in each grade to allow students to deepen and consolidate their understanding in these areas.

In **grade 6**, our instructional time focuses on five critical areas:

1. *Ratios and Rates* - connecting ratio and rate to whole number multiplication and division, and using concepts of ratio and rate to solve problems
2. *Rational Numbers Arithmetic* - completing understanding of division of fractions and extending the notion of number to the system of rational numbers, which includes negative numbers
3. *Expressions, Equations and Inequalities* - writing, interpreting, and using expressions, equations, and inequalities
4. *Geometry* - reasoning about the area of polygons and circles, and about the surface area of prisms and pyramids

To achieve mathematical understanding, students should be actively engaged in meaningful mathematics. The content and practice standards focus on developing students in the following areas:

- *Conceptual Understanding* – make sense of the math, reason about and understand math concepts and ideas
- *Procedural Fluency* – know mathematical facts, compute and do the math
- *Capacity* – solve a wide range of problems in various contexts by reasoning, thinking, and applying the mathematics they have learned.

As students apply their mathematical knowledge and skills to solve real-world problems, they also gain an understanding of the importance of mathematics throughout their lives.

We recognize that children develop their mathematical abilities at different ages. We are also committed to identifying materials that meet the needs of the different learning styles of individuals. Teachers use a variety of resources to match the learning styles and needs of their students when teaching a particular math concept or skill. These include materials that challenge students to deepen their mathematical thinking.

In **grade 6**, we use the Illustrative Mathematics, Grade 6 Accelerated curriculum:

https://im.kendallhunt.com/MS_ACC/families/1/index.html

SCIENCE- 572

Standish Chiasson

The middle school science curriculum is designed to introduce students to basic scientific disciplines such as physics, biology, chemistry, physics, and engineering, and the importance of science in their daily lives. The content is introduced through inquiry-based activities.

The Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) identify scientific and engineering practices, crosscutting concepts, and core ideas in science that all students should master in order to prepare for success in higher education and 21st-century careers. NGSS calls for more student-centered learning that enables students to think on their own, problem solve, communicate, and collaborate—in addition to learning important scientific concepts.

THE NGSS INNOVATIONS FOR SCIENCE EDUCATION

1. Three Dimensional Learning: There are three equally important, distinct dimensions to learning science included in the NGSS: Scientific and Engineering Practices, Crosscutting Concepts, and Disciplinary Core Ideas. The NGSS connects all three dimensions. To prepare students for success in college and 21st century careers, the NGSS also connects scientific principles to real-world situations, allowing for more engaging and relevant instruction to explore complicated topics.
2. All three dimensions build coherent learning progressions: The NGSS provide students with continued opportunities to engage in and develop a deeper understanding of each of the three dimensions of science. Building on the knowledge and skills gained from each grade—from elementary through high school—students have multiple opportunities to revisit and expand their understanding of all three dimensions by the end of high school.
3. Science at JCDS is interdisciplinary; collaboration among educators spanning an array of subjects provides a broad scope of opportunities and experiences for students. With these academic collaborations and the addition of the Makerspace, we can further extend science learning through the use of tools and technology.

1. Expectations:

- Students will gain an understanding of the scientific thought process, which requires creativity, accurate record-keeping, analytical thinking, scientific writing and collaboration with others
- Students will find science engaging, accessible, and relevant to their lives and society as a whole

2. Each grade level will practice the following skills:

a. Inquiry Proficiency

- Posing testable questions
- Developing salient hypotheses

- Choosing variables and controls
 - Choosing relevant supplies and technologies
 - Recording data carefully
 - Representing data in a meaningful way
 - Analyzing and interpreting data
 - Thinking critically about results
 - Developing technical writing, presentation, and argumentation skills
- b. Technical Proficiency, using various tools and techniques
- c. Ability to work successfully in scientific teams

3. Assessment

Summative assessment will be based on short, regular quizzes, tests, projects, and lab skills.

Rubrics will be periodically provided for students before an activity or assignment. After some activities, students will have opportunities to self-assess and assess group dynamics.

Science in 6th Grade

The 6th grade focuses on the life sciences. Through our units we will investigate both what we know and the methods of how we learn science and gain new science information. We will also discuss the role humans play within all facets of biology.

Cell Biology

We will explore the structure and function of the basic components of prokaryotic and eukaryotic cells through microscopy, experimentation, and various hands-on models.

Ecology

We will begin the year at a large scale, by learning about classification and the diversity of the eukaryotic kingdoms. We will discuss how life organizes itself into ecosystems, communities, populations and individuals and how humans organize life into taxonomic rank. Through experimentation and considering our connection to nature the students will use both lab and field techniques to study and improve the ecology all around us.

Evolution

Students will learn about the patterns in the fossil record that denote the existence, diversity, extinction, and change of life forms throughout the history of life on Earth. They will apply this knowledge to construct an explanation for the anatomical similarities and differences among modern organisms and between modern and fossilized organisms to infer evolutionary relationships. Students will study how genetic variations of traits in a population increase some individuals' probability of surviving and reproducing in a specific environment. They will then design models to support explanations of how natural selection may lead to increases or decreases of specific traits in populations over time.

Genetics

This unit is anchored by the study of Mendelian, non-mendelian genetics, and epigenetics. The role of genetics in medicine, agriculture, forensics, and evolutionary biology will also be addressed. Finally, we will touch on recent evolving genetic ideas and view them through a lens of their benefits or risks to the natural world.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION – חינוך גופני

Laura Ball

Grades 6-8 Overview

Focus: Advanced Physical skills and fitness

Key components: Organization of individual and team activity and exercise

Skills: Appropriate use of equipment and materials

By the end of Middle School, most students will be able to perform the following skills:

- Combining locomotor, non-locomotor, and manipulative skills to develop movement sequences and patterns both individually and with others.
 - Dribbling, Catching, Kicking, Striking
 - Throwing trapping while stationary and moving
 - Skills performed with dominant and non-dominant sides of one's body
 - Skills performed with force and accuracy (throwing at a target)
 - Using skills during activities with a rhythmic flow and speed
- Comprehension of content
 - Understanding errors in performance
 - Applying rules and strategies to activities and games
 - Apply basic principles of training and appropriate guidelines of exercise to improve immediate and long-term physical fitness

There are additional opportunities for students to continue to build their physical stamina.

Through the Middle School elective, students are able to participate in a fitness club. We have begun a Marathon Club that encourages students to participate in mile runs at school or on their own. The Century Club gives students the incentive to accomplish one hundred of a set exercise in an age-appropriate amount of time. Middle School girls will have the opportunity to participate as members of the girls' basketball team. This year we will add a boys' team as well.

ART- אמנות

Vered Singer

Overview

The JCDS Art Program exposes children to different mediums and art techniques. Students are encouraged to use their own creative expression through experimentation and exploration. Our primary goal is to help the students appreciate the joy of the art and the artistic process!

The foundation for art program centers on acquainting students with various classical and contemporary artists and their works*. We also integrate Jewish traditions into the art rendered and familiarize students with different artistic motifs. Consistent with JCDS's mission of providing a bilingual education, art is taught predominantly in Hebrew.

Learning Expectations

By the end of the school year, most students will develop an aesthetic awareness, be able to create an aesthetic art form, develop self-expression and creativity through the arts, and feel sufficiently comfortable expressing themselves through art.

Familiarization with different artists and their works

Students will:

- Become familiar with different artists, their style, and their work
- Become familiar with the period in which their art was done
- Interpret and extract meaning from artistic works
- Learn the basic concepts of the artistic works through reading, observation, and discussion
- Become familiar with the use of colors and know basic art terminology

Familiarization with Different Materials and Media

Students will:

- Work with watercolor, oil pastels, tempera paints, colored pencils, charcoal, ink, crayons, and markers
- Work with different types of textured papers including, but not limited to: crepe paper, tissue paper, corrugated cardboard, construction paper, sketch paper, and newspaper
- Apply the use of different materials including, but not limited to: plaster of Paris, clay, copper, fabric, yarn, Styrofoam, and sponge

Art and the Jewish and Israeli Holidays

Students will become familiar with common symbols of the Jewish tradition and with Jewish artistic techniques such as paper cutting, embroidery, weaving, and etching.

Artist of the Year by Class

This year, Sixth Grade students will do an in-depth study of **Claude Monet's** life, technique, and style. We will focus on his paintings, looking carefully at motif and composition, and examine and discuss foreground and background colors chosen.



BOSTON'S JEWISH COMMUNITY DAY SCHOOL
בית ספר יהודי קהילתי

7th Grade
Curriculum Overview
תכנית הלימודים בכיתה ז'

תשפ"ג/2022-2023

Classroom Community / Kehillah – קהילה כיתתית

Middot v'Derekh Eretz- ארץ- מידות ודרך : Values and Conduct

We learn from Midrash that *דרך ארץ קדמה לתורה*, *Derekh erez kadma l'Torah*, the path of proper conduct, precedes the study of Torah. (Vayikra Rabbah Ch. 9). We recognize that if *derekh erez* precedes the study of Torah, then *derekh erez* must precede all studies.

We, at JCDS, commit ourselves to a social curriculum based on *מידות middot*, (the active expression of Jewish ethical values) to go hand-in-hand with our academic learning. We continually discuss and implement practices that support the mission of JCDS and enable each student and adult to learn and achieve in a safe and joyful environment.

As well, we participate in **Facing History and Ourselves (FHAO)**, and we integrate FHAO's embedded core learning principles of *Intellectual Rigor*, *Ethical Reflection*, *Emotional Engagement*, and *Civic Agency* into our JCDS Middle School curriculum. In addition to incorporating FHAO content into our curriculum, we draw regularly on its best practices techniques, as Facing History is not just about *what* we teach, but *how* we teach it.

The standard Facing History curriculum is a journey in five parts.

1. *The Individual and Society* focuses “on how both individual and national identities are formed, as well as how these identities influence behavior and decision-making.”
2. *We and They* focuses on national and collective identity and the way in which membership in a group can connect people to each other and create a sense of connection and belonging, but membership can also exclude and create misunderstanding and conflict between groups.
3. *Choosing to Participate* brings everything together by helping students see how understanding the past can and does connect with the present. Students realize that through their actions and choices, they have the ability to change history.

Throughout the year, we emphasize the great importance of creating a *kehillah* (classroom community) in which all members feel safe and valued. In the course of class discussions, we often articulate what it means to treat one other with kindness and respect. We also work toward fostering independence and social and academic self-advocacy to ensure that students feel empowered to express themselves appropriately.

T'FILLAH at JCDS- תפילה ב

T'fillah-prayer is integral to JCDS' pluralistic education and is one of the ways we provide a common grounding in Jewish practice and values. It expresses our core identity as a living, celebrating Jewish community. In our T'fillot (prayer services), we seek both to sustain one another and to reach beyond ourselves. JCDS is committed to being a safe space for students (and the whole community) to explore and grow into our particular

beliefs and understandings. For all of us, T'fillah is a setting in which our community can join in song, contemplation, growing mastery, and deepening commitment. JCDS continues to make an intentional effort to deepen ruach (spirit) and kavanah (intention/focus) in t'fillah.

T'fillah in Middle School

Students have the opportunity for T'fillah every day though the service and grouping varies:

Monday: Communal shacharit service in Beit K'nesset, with monthly alternative minyan breakout options and a communal Torah Service

Tuesday: Optional Shacharit in the morning. Traditional Minha (the Afternoon Service) in Beit K'nesset or Guided Minha Meditation.

Wednesday: T'fillah Electives (see below)

Thursday: Communal Shacharit service in Beit K'nesset with Torah Service.

Friday: Optional Shacharit in the morning. Whole school Kabbalat Shabbat closes out our week with song, stories, and connection.

There is a rotation among the Middle School advisories for handing out the honor and responsibility of leading in the Minyan each week so that students gain practice in the skill of leading and so they have the opportunity to find their own voice as leaders and Torah readers.

Seating in our Minyanim is mixed (boys and girls together), though we do occasionally conduct communal services with a “tri-chitza” – an arrangement with mixed and separate seating. Students who feel uncomfortable praying in a mixed-seating setting are welcome to pray in an area on one side of the room. With regard to *Shlichut Tzibbur* (leading others in prayer) and the Torah service, our (flexible) standard is egalitarian. We ask that boys and some girls wear Tallit and T'fillin as they and their families choose. In addition, our head-covering policy requires that students follow their family's custom when deciding if and how to cover one's head in the Beit K'nesset.

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Parents are always welcome to join our Middle School T'fillah on Mondays and Thursdays.

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Maayan Lipiner, Avital Fux, Alla Shimron

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Beginning in 4th grade, students are divided into Novice, Intermediate and Intermediate High/Advanced proficiency groupings which mirror the language of native Israeli speakers. Students are able to move among these groups within a given school year as their progress indicates. Each lesson strives to maximize the balance between learning new aspects of the language and practicing being in 'simulated' real-life environment students may find themselves in outside the classroom.

Thematic units:

- 1- The Last Witness (העד האחרון) "זכור (Remembrance) מקום (Place) החופש הגדול (Summer vacation) - הגדול
- 2- "ילדת הקשת בענן" (ילדת הקשת בענן) זכור (Remembrance) (Place) מקום (Summer vacation) החופש הגדול - (The Rainbow Girl)
- 3- שבוע בחיי (A week in my life) סביבת מגורים (Neighborhood) עץ המשפחה (Family Tree) - המשפחה

HUMANITIES - מדעי הרוח

In seventh and eighth grades, the Humanities curriculum is divided into two specific classes – **English taught by Joanne Baker and Social Studies taught by Josh Mocle**. The result is a two-year course of study in these respective disciplines in which themes are frequently integrated, while both general and discipline-specific skills are taught.

ENGLISH- ספרות אנגלית

Joanne Baker

In seventh grade, the Humanities curriculum is divided into two specific classes: **English taught by Joanne Baker**, and Social Science taught by Josh Mocle. The result is a two-year course of study in these respective disciplines in which themes are frequently integrated while both general and discipline-specific skills are taught.

The 7th grade **English** curriculum is divided into five essential areas:

1. *Literature*,
2. *Writing*
3. *Grammar*;
4. *Greek & Latin roots / spelling /vocabulary*
5. *Miscellany*

For organizational purposes, these areas are also the divisions of each student's English binder. Throughout the academic year, there will be a regular in-class check of students' individual binders to keep them up-to-date and orderly.

- **Literature/Writing**

In the literary arena, each book read shall be its own reward. Each book will also be used as a vehicle for various types of literary and expository writing and impromptu and thematic discussions that include inferencing and synthesizing with focus on comprehension strategies. There is a large pool of books that are age-appropriate and challenging for seventh graders. Italicized below is a small sampling of various books we may use followed by the academic activities accompanying these choices.

~*Gracefully Grayson* by Ami Polonsky

Students will journal, throughout the reading of this beautiful story of a transgender teen, their thoughts and reactions to the people around protagonist, Grayson Sender, and how they help or hinder him in his multi-layered identity struggle. Students will also deeply contemplate how we at JCDS support kids, who for any number of reasons, may feel marginalized or out of place, and how we might put ideas into action to make everyone feel welcomed and comfortable.

~*Nothing But The Truth* by Avi

Thought-provoking discussions ensue and short essays are written from both personal and observed experiences pertinent to one's own life in the matter of what constitutes truth and telling the truth. This year, on so many levels, the novel is particularly timely.

~*Trell* by Dick Lehr

This is the 2nd year this amazing young adult novel (based on Dick Lehr's working on the Boston Globe's Spotlight Team on which he was part of the group who cracked the case that inspired the book). We will discuss and write about the great importance of journalism and fighting for justice.

~*Bronx Masquerade* by Nikki Grimes

The language, structure, and text of poetry is studied and examined, and students write their own powerful verse while savoring, together as a class, this contemporary novel.

~*Boy* by Roald Dahl

Upward of 15 personal narratives are written, and students choose between 7 – 10 of them to polish, edit, and illustrate. These narratives then become the texts of their own annotated autobiographical book.

~*Okay for Now* by Gary D. Schmidt

Students will discuss the social difficulties of the protagonist and how the art prints of James Audubon allow him to connect with his emotional self.

~*The Call of the Wild* by Jack London

An essay is composed in which students track the metamorphosis of Buck, the canine protagonist, from house pet to animal of the wild

~*Romeo & Juliet / West Side Story* Shakespeare/Bernstein

Drama, discussion, acting, music, and a variety of writings will all be a part of this unit comparing and contrasting Shakespeare's *Romeo & Juliet* with Bernstein's *West Side Story*.

- **Writing**

Several essays and various short writings, independent of literature, will be composed by students this year, including bimonthly 7th Grade Writes.

- **Grammar/Mechanics**

Students study and learn: *basic grammar, parts of speech, sentence structure, proper use of punctuation*, and to *determine phrases from clauses*. As well, the essence of grammar/mechanics study is to apply that learned to writing (and speaking).

- **Greek & Latin Roots, Vocabulary, and Spelling**

By the end of 7th grade, students will commit 200 - 250 roots to memory. As it arises, unfamiliar vocabulary from literature will be discussed and taught. An individualized spelling program is ongoing throughout the year, including bi-monthly quizzes.

- **Miscellany**

Word games, moral dilemma discussions, desk drumming, Roman Numerals, 'Everyday edits,' a myriad of other topics, and cultural literacy categories are intertwined into English class throughout the year.

SOCIAL STUDIES – מדעי החברה

Josh Mocle

E Pluribus Unum: From Many, One
The Historical Struggle for Democracy

The JCDS Social Studies curriculum is informed by the Massachusetts History and Social Studies Curriculum Framework. According to this document, schools have an obligation

to “purposely impart to their students the learning necessary for an informed, reasoned allegiance to the ideals of a free society.” Our study of Social Studies includes the fields of history, geography, economics, and civics and government that are essential to the study of democracy and to the development of educated and responsible citizens.

The reading of primary source documents is a key feature of the Social Studies curriculum. Students utilize the skills of historical examination and analysis, critical and creative thinking, and the technological tools available to 21st century learners, to work individually, as well as collaboratively on projects involving research, design, and the production of models that apply skills to modern world situations. Students will communicate their findings orally and in writing.

A lifelong awareness of, and interest in, contemporary world and national events is fostered through research, discussion, and debate, as students find their own place in the history, present and future of our planet. Over the course of these two years, students will gain proficiency in evaluating, synthesizing, and oral and written expression.

In seventh grade, students examine the historical and intellectual origins of the United States from North American Colonization to the Civil War and Reconstruction. They learn about the factors that contributed to the outbreak of the American Revolution as well as the consequences of the Revolution, including the writing and key ideas of the U.S. Constitution and the Bill of Rights as well as the work of the Supreme Court and the U.S. Presidency. Students will study these basic frameworks of American democracy with an emphasis on using the study of history to better understand the world today and to determine how they can best contribute to our society as they grow.

תנ"ך- TANAKH

Talia Laster

A reexamination of Genesis with commentary.

We will focus on the style and language of the Biblical text by studying discrete chunks of text from Parshiot Noach, Lech Lecha, Vayera, and Breishit. We will dive into the nuances and details of the biblical Hebrew and narrative style. We will read with the interpretive assumption that the Torah is an intentionally written text, and apparent contradictions and ellipses are opportunities for interpretation.

We will also study selected classical commentaries, with an emphasis on Rashi, analyzing how the Jewish traditional commentators have kept the text of the Torah timeless and meaningful.

As student-directed text discussion serves as the culminating activity of every unit, students will have an opportunity to apply their mastery of the biblical Hebrew towards meaning-making through probing questions and dialogue with one another.

Major Course Objectives:

1. Students will become independent and literarily astute readers of the biblical text in Hebrew.
2. Students will develop a love of Torah study for its own sake and embrace it as an inspiring resource, informing their values, moral commitments and ways of experiencing the world.

TOSHBA – תושב"ע

Noah Westreich

The driving goal of the Toshba curriculum is to make students aware they are recipients of the oral tradition and are vital links in the chain of transmission. In the middle school at JCDS students devote three classes per week to the study of Toshba, an acronym for torah sheb'al peh, "Oral Torah." Selected mishnayot are the focus of study in Toshba classes in grades 5, 6, and 7 and revolve around themes both seasonally and personally relevant to the students and the community. In their Toshba classes students sharpen their analytical skills by engaging with each other in chavruta (small group learning partnerships) and shiur, the engaging lecture and discussion accompanying their learning. During havruta and in shiur students build skills and strengthen their inquisitive thinking by means of reading commentaries, learning the Hebrew words and their roots, answering discussion questions, and articulating their own personal vantage point.

Purpose of Toshba:

- Understand that there are sources of information about Jewish practice and values in texts besides Tanakh.
- Develop habits of mind which help to build analytical skills.
- Learn material via bekiut (broad strokes learning) and iyun (inquisitive analysis).
- Gain a vision of the breadth of a Jewish life and appreciate how our tradition imbues each stage with meaning and purpose.

Core 7th Grade Toshba Texts:

- מעגל השנה היהודי – The Jewish Year
- מעגל החיים היהודי – The Jewish Life Cycle
- We Are What We Eat- האוכל על כל היבטיו וטעמיו (BT Chullin 110a)
- And more...

MATH – מתמטיקה

Yaara David and Sarah Langer

Our JCDS program is following the Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for Mathematics adopted by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education in March

2017. The 2017 Framework continues to concentrate on fewer topics in each grade to allow students to deepen and consolidate their understanding in these areas.

In **grade 7**, our instructional time focuses on four critical areas:

1. *Proportional Relationships* - developing an understanding of and applying proportional relationships
2. *Expressions and Equations* - improving understanding of operations with rational numbers and working with expressions and linear equations
3. *Geometry* - solving problems involving scale drawings and informal geometric constructions, and working with two- and three-dimensional shapes to solve problems involving area, surface area, and volume; also working with congruency and similarity

To achieve mathematical understanding, students should be actively engaged in meaningful mathematics. The content and practice standards focus on developing students in the following areas:

- *Conceptual Understanding* – make sense of the math, reason about and understand math concepts and ideas
- *Procedural Fluency* – know mathematical facts, compute and do the math
- *Capacity* – solve a wide range of problems in various contexts by reasoning, thinking, and applying the mathematics they have learned.

As students apply their mathematical knowledge and skills to solve real-world problems, they also gain an understanding of the importance of mathematics throughout their lives.

We recognize that children develop their mathematical abilities at different ages. We are also committed to identifying materials that meet the needs of the different learning styles of individuals. Teachers use a variety of resources to match the learning styles and needs of their students when teaching a particular math concept or skill. These include materials that challenge students to deepen their mathematical thinking.

In **grade 7**, we use the Illustrative Mathematics, Grade 7 and Grade 7 Accelerated curriculum: <https://im.kendallhunt.com/>

SCIENCE-מדע

Standish Chiasson

The Middle School science curriculum is designed to introduce students to basic scientific disciplines such as biology, chemistry, physics and engineering, and the

importance of science in their daily lives. The content is introduced through inquiry-based activities.

The Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) identify scientific and engineering practices, crosscutting concepts, and core ideas in science that all students should master in order to prepare for success in higher education and 21st-century careers. NGSS calls for more student-centered learning that enables students to think on their own, problem solve, communicate, and collaborate—in addition to learning important scientific concepts.

THE NGSS INNOVATIONS FOR SCIENCE EDUCATION

1. **Three Dimensional Learning:** There are three equally important, distinct dimensions to learning science included in the NGSS: Scientific and Engineering Practices, Crosscutting Concepts, and Disciplinary Core Ideas. The NGSS connects all three dimensions. To prepare students for success in college and 21st century careers, the NGSS also connects scientific principles to real-world situations, allowing for more engaging and relevant instruction to explore complicated topics.
2. **All three dimensions build coherent learning progressions:** The NGSS provide students with continued opportunities to engage in and develop a deeper understanding of each of the three dimensions of science. Building on the knowledge and skills gained from each grade—from elementary through high school—students have multiple opportunities to revisit and expand their understanding of all three dimensions by the end of high school.
3. **Science at JCDS is interdisciplinary;** collaboration among educators spanning an array of subjects provides a broad scope of opportunities and experiences for students. With these academic collaborations and the addition of the Makerspace, we can further extend science learning through the use of tools and technology.

1. Expectations:

- Students will gain an understanding of the scientific thought process, which requires creativity, accurate record-keeping, analytical thinking, scientific writing and collaboration with others
- Students will find science engaging, accessible, and relevant to their lives and society as a whole

2. Each grade level will practice the following skills:

a. Inquiry Proficiency

- Posing testable questions
- Developing salient hypotheses
- Choosing variables and controls
- Choosing relevant supplies and technologies
- Recording data carefully
- Representing data in a meaningful way
- Analyzing and interpreting data

- Thinking critically about results
 - Developing technical writing, presentation, and argumentation skills
- b. Technical Proficiency, using various tools and techniques
- c. Ability to work successfully in scientific teams

3. Assessment

Summative assessment will be based on short, regular quizzes, tests, projects, and lab skills. Rubrics will be periodically provided for students before an activity or assignment. After some activities, students will have opportunities to self-assess and assess group dynamics.

Science in 7th Grade

The 7th grade focuses on Earth and Space Sciences. Through our units we will investigate both what we know and the methods of how we learn science and gain new science information. We will also discuss the role humans play within all facets of science exploration and how we can use scientific knowledge to make changes to our world.

History of the Earth:

We will investigate how the geologic time scale helps to organize Earth's history. Students will demonstrate that Earth's systems interact over scales that range from microscopic to global in size and operate over fractions of a second to billions of years. We will discuss how these processes have shaped Earth's history and will determine its future. Through the investigation of rock structure and formation we will make clear how Earth's plates have moved great distances, collided, and spread out.

Earth's Systems:

We will study how land and underground water movements cause weathering and erosion, which change the land's surface features and create underground formations. Students will discover that water continually cycles among the land, ocean, and atmosphere via transpiration, evaporation, condensation, sublimation, deposition, precipitation, infiltration, and runoff. They will make connections to how these processes change the composition of resources in our biosphere. We will then explore how many of these resources are limited and many are not renewable or replaceable in a human lifespan.

Weather & Climate:

This unit will focus on investigations into how weather and climate are influenced by interactions involving sunlight, the oceans, atmosphere, ice, landforms, and living things, and how these interactions vary with locations on the Earth. Students will develop and use models to describe how rotation and unequal heating of the Earth cause patterns of atmospheric and oceanic circulation that determine regional climates. We will discuss, analyze, and explore the human impact of the biosphere. Then we will develop, design,

test, and possibly implement techniques that will serve to reduce and counteract the effects of climate change.

Space Systems:

In this unit we will establish a foundational knowledge of the astronomical objects that make up our solar system. We will discuss how the sun, planets, moons, comets, and asteroids are held in orbit by gravity. We will investigate the relationships between these astronomical objects and how their influence on one another creates patterns in the sky that can be observed, described, predicted, and explained with models. We will expand our thinking outward to contemplate that Earth and its solar system are part of the Milky Way galaxy, which is just one of many galaxies in the universe.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION- חינוך גופני

Laura Ball

Grades 6-8 Overview

Focus: Advanced Physical skills and fitness

Key components: Organization of individual and team activity and exercise

Skills: Appropriate use of equipment and materials

By the end of Middle School, most students will be able to perform the following skills:

- Combining locomotor non-locomotor and manipulative skills to develop movement sequences and patterns both individually and with others.
 - Dribbling, catching, kicking, striking
 - Throwing while stationary and moving
 - Skills performed with dominant and non-dominant sides of one's body
 - Skills performed with force and accuracy (throwing at a target)
 - Using skills during activities with a rhythmic flow and speed
- Comprehension of content
 - Understanding errors in performance
 - Applying rules and strategies to activities and games
 - Applying basic principles of training and appropriate guidelines of exercise to improve immediate and long-term physical fitness

There are additional opportunities for students to continue to build their physical stamina. Through the Middle School elective, students are able to participate in a fitness club. We have begun a Marathon Club that encourages students to participate in mile runs at school or on their own. The Century Club gives students the incentive to accomplish one hundred of a set exercise in an age-appropriate amount of time. Middle School students have the opportunity to participate as members of the girls' and boys' basketball teams.

אמנות-ART

Vered Singer

Overview

The JCDS Art Program exposes children to different mediums and art techniques. Students are encouraged to use their own creative expression through experimentation and exploration. Our primary goal is to help the students appreciate the joy of the art and the artistic process!

The foundation for art program centers on acquainting students with various classical and contemporary artists and their works*. We also integrate Jewish traditions into the art rendered and familiarize students with different artistic motifs. Consistent with JCDS's mission of providing a bilingual education, art is taught predominantly in Hebrew.

Learning Expectations

By the end of the school year, most students will develop an aesthetic awareness, be able to create an aesthetic art form, develop self-expression and creativity through the arts, and feel sufficiently comfortable expressing themselves through art.

***Familiarization with different artists and their works**

Students will:

- Become familiar with different artists, their style, and their work
- Become familiar with the period in which their art was done
- Interpret and extract meaning from artistic works
- Learn the basic concepts of the artistic works through reading, observation, and discussion
- Become familiar with the use of colors and know basic art terminology.

Familiarization with Different Materials and Media

Students will:

- Work with watercolor, oil pastels, tempera paints, colored pencils, charcoal, ink, crayons, and markers
- Work with different types of textured papers including, but not limited to: crepe paper, tissue paper, corrugated cardboard, construction paper, sketch paper, and newspaper
- Apply the use of different materials including, but not limited to: plaster of Paris, clay, copper, fabric, yarn, Styrofoam, and sponge

Art and the Jewish and Israeli Holidays

Students will become familiar with common symbols of the Jewish tradition and with Jewish artistic techniques such as paper cutting, embroidery, weaving, and etching.

Artist of the Year by Class

This year, Seventh Grade students will do an in-depth study of **Alexander Calder's** life, technique, and style. We will focus on his paintings, looking carefully at motif and composition, and examine and discuss foreground and background colors chosen.



BOSTON'S JEWISH COMMUNITY DAY SCHOOL
בית ספר יהודי קהילתי

8th Grade
Curriculum Overview
תכנית הלימודים בכיתה ח'

2022-2023 תשפ"ג

קהילה כיתתית – Classroom Community / Kehillah

Middot v'Derekh Eretz-דרך ארץ : Values and Conduct

We learn from Midrash that דרך ארץ קדמה לתורה, *Derekh erez kadma l'Torah*, the path of proper conduct, precedes the study of Torah. (Vayikra Rabbah Ch. 9). We recognize that if *derekh erez* precedes the study of Torah, then *derekh erez* must precede all studies. We, at JCDS, commit ourselves to a social curriculum based on מידות *middot*, (the active expression of Jewish ethical values) to go hand-in-hand with our academic learning. We continually discuss and implement practices that support the mission of JCDS and enable each student and adult to learn and achieve in a safe and joyful environment.

As well, we participate in **Facing History and Ourselves (FHAO)**, and we work to integrate FHAO's embedded core learning principles of *Intellectual Rigor, Ethical Reflection, Emotional Engagement*, and *Civic Agency* into our JCDS Middle School curriculum. In addition to incorporating FHAO content into our curriculum, we draw regularly on its best practices techniques, as Facing History is not just about *what* we teach, but *how* we teach it.

The standard Facing History curriculum is a journey in five parts.

1. *The Individual and Society* focuses “on how both individual and national identities are formed, as well as how these identities influence behavior and decision-making.”
2. *We and They* focuses on national and collective identity and the way in which membership in a group can connect people to each other and create a sense of connection and belonging, but membership can also exclude and create misunderstanding and conflict between groups.
3. *Choosing to Participate* brings everything together by helping students see how understanding the past can and does connect with the present. Students realize that through their actions and choices, they have the ability to change history.

Throughout the year, we emphasize the importance of creating a *kehillah* (classroom community) in which all members feel safe and valued. In the course of class discussions, we often articulate what it means to treat one another with kindness and respect. We also work toward fostering independence and social and academic self-advocacy to ensure that students feel empowered to express themselves appropriately.

תפילה ב- JCDS-T'FILLAH

תפילה-T'fillah-prayer is integral to JCDS' pluralistic education and is one of the ways we provide a common grounding in Jewish practice and values. It expresses our core identity as a living, celebrating Jewish community. In our T'fillot (prayer services), we seek both to sustain one another and to reach beyond ourselves. JCDS is committed to being a safe space for students (and the whole community) to explore and grow into our particular

beliefs and understandings. For all of us, T'fillah is a setting in which our community can join in song, contemplation, growing mastery, and deepening commitment. JCDS continues to make an intentional effort to deepen ruach (spirit) and kavanah (intention/focus) in t'fillah.

T'fillah in Middle School

Students have the opportunity for T'fillah every day though the service and grouping varies:

Monday: Communal shacharit service in Beit K'nesset, with monthly alternative minyan breakout options and a communal Torah Service

Tuesday: Optional Shacharit in the morning. Traditional Minha (the Afternoon Service) in Beit K'nesset or Guided Minha Meditation.

Wednesday: T'fillah Electives (see below)

Thursday: Communal Shacharit service in Beit K'nesset with Torah Service.

Friday: Optional Shacharit in the morning. Whole school Kabbalat Shabbat closes out our week with song, stories, and connection.

There is a rotation among the Middle School advisories for handing out the honor and responsibility of leading in the Minyan each week, so that students gain practice in the skill of leading and so they have the opportunity to find their own voice as leaders and Torah readers.

Seating in our Minyanim is mixed (boys and girls together), though we do occasionally conduct communal services with a “tri-chitza” – an arrangement with mixed and separate seating. Students who feel uncomfortable praying in a mixed-seating setting are welcome to pray in an area on one side of the room. With regard to *Shlichut Tzibbur* (leading others in prayer) and the Torah service, our (flexible) standard is egalitarian. We ask that boys and some girls wear Tallit and T'fillin as they and their families choose. In addition, our head-covering policy requires that students follow their family's custom when deciding if and how to cover one's head in the Beit K'nesset.

T'fillah Electives: Middle School students can seek out and express their own path in our Wednesday mornings T'fillah Elective Minyanim. Choices vary from term to term and have included Nigunim (singing), Coding T'fillah, Jewish art, Dramatizing T'fillot, Photography, Jewish Feminism Discussion, Moral Dilemma discussion, T'fillah with Gan Nitzan, Yoga, Cooking the Parasha (Torah Portion), and Teva (Nature) T'fillah.

In-school B'nei Mitzvah Celebrations: Students reach and mark their Bar/Bat/B Mitzvah in Middle School. JCDS has a longstanding practice of inviting parents, teachers, and

classmates to honor the Bar or Bat Mitzvah student with a modest ceremony during Monday or Thursday T'fillah in the week prior to the observance with his or her home community.

Parents are always welcome to join our Middle School T'fillah on Mondays and Thursdays.

HEBREW - עברית

Maayan Lipiner, Alla Shimron and Uri Offenbacher

The Proficiency Approach to Hebrew acquisition provides students with the tools that support JCDS' mission to "nurture the whole child and enable each child to reach his or her highest potential." Our Hebrew curricular model is based on a sophisticated understanding of second language acquisition which allows teachers the flexibility they need to differentiate their instruction to meet the needs of all students. One key component of the program is the assessment tool that measures each learner's ability to function using meaningful Hebrew and real life communication. The data we collect from students' work, and our understanding of each student's learning profile, enables us to adjust the instruction and articulate specific goals for each student.

Beginning in 5th grade, students are divided into Novice, Intermediate and Intermediate High/Advanced proficiency groupings which mirror the language of native Israeli speakers. Students are able to move among these groups within a given school year as their progress indicates. Each lesson strives to maximize the balance between learning new aspects of the language and practicing being in 'simulated' real-life environment students may find themselves in outside the classroom.

The units for grade 8 this year include:

1. זכות וחובה Rights and Responsibilities; שביל ישראל Shvil Israel; משואות Masuot
2. זכות וחובה Rights and responsibilities; אהבה Ahavah; זכור Remembrance; "שרה גיבורת גילי"
3. הכרות Getting acquainted; סביבה לימודית learning environment; בית אוכל משפחה Home, Food, and Family; סדר יום routines ועונות Seasons and clothes.

ENGLISH אנגלית

Joanne Baker

In eighth grade, the Humanities curriculum is divided into two specific classes: English taught by Joanne Baker, and Social Studies taught by Josh Mocle. The result is a two-year

course of study in these respective disciplines in which themes are frequently integrated, while both general and discipline-specific skills are taught.

- Organization

The 8th grade English curriculum is divided into five essential areas:

1. Literature,
2. Writing,
3. Grammar
4. Greek & Latin roots / spelling /vocabulary
5. Miscellany

For organizational purposes, these areas are also the divisions of each student's English binder. Throughout the year, there will be a regular in-class check of each student's binder to keep it up-to-date and orderly.

- Literature/Writing

In the literary arena, each book read shall be its own reward. Each book will also be used as a vehicle for various types of literary and expository writing and impromptu and thematic discussions, including focus on comprehension strategies, inferencing and synthesizing. There is a large selection of potential books that are age-appropriate and challenging for eighth graders; italicized below is a small sampling of some of them followed by the academic activities accompanying these choices.

~*Gracefully Grayson* by Ami Polonsky

Students will journal, throughout the reading of this beautiful story of a transgender teen, their thoughts and reactions to the people around protagonist, Grayson Sender, and how they help or hinder Grayson in her multi-layered identity struggle.

~*Trell* by Dick Lehr

Students will discuss and write about the great importance of journalism and fighting for justice as we read this novel, based on the realities of a case from many decades in Boston, in which a young black girl was killed in the crossfire of gang violence. This story takes many twists and turns, and the protagonist, Trell, a girl the age of our 8th graders, has resilience, integrity, and incredible perseverance.

~*To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee

We shall read and study everything about this novel through the eyes of *Facing History and Ourselves*. As well, students will compose a literary essay based on a character, theme, or motif of their choosing from the novel. We may also do an integrated essay between Tanakh and English, in which students compare and contrast the Bible story of Joseph and Potiphar's wife to that of *To Kill a Mockingbird*'s Tom Robinson and Mayella Ewell.

~*The Merchant of Venice* by Wm. Shakespeare

Students will give voice to Shylock, the Jewish money lender, by writing a scene, in the language of the Bard, for Act V. We will also act out various parts of this play as we discuss Shylock's dual role as villain & victim in the play.

~*Animal Farm* by George Orwell

Students will write an analytical essay in which they compare the rise of power of Adolf Hitler in Nazi Germany (which they simultaneously study in Social Science) to Napoleon, the animal protagonist of *Animal Farm*, who, as a dictator, rises to power on the farm.

- Writing

Several other essays, compositions, and various writings, independent of literature, will be composed by students this year, including '25 Minute Essays,' and weekly 8th Grade Writes.

- Grammar/Mechanics

Students continue to study and learn: basic grammar, parts of speech, sentence structure, proper use of punctuation, and to determine phrases from clauses. The essence of their grammar/mechanics study is to apply that which is learned to their written work and spoken language.

- Greek & Latin Roots, Vocabulary, and Spelling

By the end of 8th grade, students will commit 300 or so roots to memory. New words are introduced several times a month in preparation for high school placement exams, and as it arises, unfamiliar vocabulary from literature will be discussed and taught. An individualistic bi-monthly spelling program will begin in November and be ongoing throughout the remainder of the year.

- Miscellany

Word games, moral dilemma discussions, desk drumming, 'Everyday edits', and a myriad of other topics, and cultural literacy categories are intertwined into English class throughout the year. Beginning in mid-October (following the hagim) each eighth graders will also have a number of ongoing responsibilities to complete each semester. These requirements range from writing two old fashioned 'snail-mail' letters, to reading an individually chosen number of outside reading books, to putting forth their very best effort in each endeavor of their English class, which includes arriving promptly each day, being as organized as they are able to be, and being timely with homework and in-class assignments.

SOCIAL STUDIES –מדעי החברה

Josh Mocle

Holocaust and Human Behavior

“How who we are informs what we do”

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A lifelong awareness of, and interest in, contemporary world events is fostered through research, map study, discussion, and debate, as students find their own place in the history, present, and future of our planet. Over the course of the year, students gain proficiency in evaluating, synthesizing, and oral and written expression.

In eighth grade, the curriculum picks up the timeline established by the 7th grade curriculum, beginning in the early 20th century and is guided by the overarching essential question of “Who Belongs?”

This question will be explored in four primary units:

- The Industrial Revolution: By examining the shift of the world from an Agrarian Society to an Industrial one, students are able to better understand the technological, social and political changes that were the undercurrent for most of the main conflicts of the 20th century and still impact us today.
- Holocaust and Human Behavior, a Facing History and Ourselves unit. Students look deeply at the decisions individuals made about their own lives and the lives of their

neighbors in difficult historical moments. Areas of focus include: Jewish Life Before the War, the Weimar Republic, the Rise of the Nazis, Obedience and Conformity, Bystanders, Rescuers and Resisters, and Judgment, Memory, and Legacy.

- The History of the State of Israel: in our newest history unit, we will look deeply at the founding and establishment of the state of Israel from the first fleeting embers of Zionism in the late 1800s, through the Yishuv era and first five aliyot, to the establishment of the state in 1948, all the way up to the present day. We will chronicle the development of Israeli cultural identity and national values, and wrestle with the complexities of Israel's existence as a Jewish and democratic state.

Our year will conclude with our traditional 8th Grade Teaching Project, where students will choose a topic and conceive, plan, and teach lessons of their own on that topic. They will be guided through the lesson planning process and encouraged to pick a topic to which they feel a personal connection. Through taking direct ownership of not only their learning, but the learning of their classmates as well, they will conclude their JCDS Social Studies experience by taking their place in the ranks of those who preserve history for future generations.

תנ"ך - TANAKH

Dorit Zmori

This year the eighth grade will gain a fresh perspective on the book of Bereishit (Genesis) with the focus on Sipurai Yosef (Joseph's stories); In addition we will explore similar themes and linguistic parallels between the story of Yossef and Megilat Esther.

Our goals for the year are twofold: to increase our ability to learn and comprehend original text and commentators, and to deepen the connection we feel with Jewish texts and appreciate the relevance of their lessons for our lives. Through PoP, the Pedagogy of Partnership, our students learn to pay attention to both the text and their havrutah partner in learning. They develop the ability to hold open multiple perspectives, uncover deeper meaning, and hear what others have to say while simultaneously discovering their own voice; through the interpretive process.

We also use the Standards and Benchmark approach in our learning. The use of Essential Questions and Enduring Understandings helps with the goal of engaging students in the learning process and deepening students' critical thinking skills. We use Performance Assessments to provide opportunities for students to demonstrate higher level and critical thinking skills, such as the ability to compare, apply, analyze and synthesize their knowledge and skills through a series of tasks.

תושב"ע- TOSHBA

Talia Laster

Content: As fully-fledged members of the adult community, students in 8th grade will gain and hone skills not only related to the study of Mishna and Gemara, but will also encounter texts from other texts and codes of Jewish law.

Students will begin by studying various *mishnayot* and short *sugyot* (sections of Talmud) related to the Tishrei holidays. In addition, students will be introduced to a traditional *daf* (page) of Talmud, which shows Mishna, Gemara, and other commentaries such as that of Rashi. We will aim to become comfortable with learning from the *daf* itself. As the calendar moves into the month of Kislev we will study texts from masechet Shabbat as well as a selection from the Book of Maccabees, which is part of the “apocrypha” (a book that was left out of the Tanakh).

Throughout the year, we will review and deepen our understanding of the relationship between and functions of the Written Law and Oral Law, including the progression of rabbinic texts from ancient through contemporary. With a solid understanding of the relationship of different genres of text to each other, students will be able to begin the process of following individual laws through those genres as they strive to find personal meaning in our tradition.

We will review a famous case study of conjoined twins in which *halakha* played an integral part by studying pertinent texts, as well as review the laws of the Sanhedrin, the legal body which oversaw the application of the law in rabbinic society. Students will see how Jewish law has evolved over time and how it can still be meaningful and relevant in the twenty-first century.

The majority of time during the last half of the year will be dedicated to students’ final projects in Toshba. This is a work that showcases what they’ve learned in Toshba throughout their time at JCDS and is mostly self-guided. After selecting a topic in which they have an interest and it is approved by the instructor, students will research the evolution of that topic through a Jewish lens, beginning with the Torah and early rabbinic expansions. Students will consult differing opinions on that topic in the Mishna and Gemara, legal codes, and responsa (both early and contemporary) that are germane to their topic. Students will produce a final paper that explains the evolution of their topic through various Jewish religious texts, a virtual source sheet that shows the pertinent texts they’ve studied, and a poster that explains their topic which will be exhibited in school before graduation.

Skills:

Students will continue to hone their skills as *hevrutot* (study partners), as well as begin to consider texts individually and form their own opinions.

Students will continue to use their growing Hebrew skills as more emphasis is put on decoding the language of both the Mishna and Gemara. As part of a process of “owning” the text, they will also work toward memorizing key texts at the center of each unit. Students will start to build a vocabulary of key terms that are repeated throughout the Talmud which can be the keys to help unlock texts.

MATH - מתמטיקה

Ya'ara David, Sarah Langer and Jon Star

Our JCDS program is following the Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for Mathematics adopted by the Board of Elementary and Secondary Education in March 2017. The 2017 Framework continues to concentrate on fewer topics in each grade to allow students to deepen and consolidate their understanding in these areas.

In **grade 8**, we teach a traditional Algebra 1 curriculum, including:

1. *Equations and Inequalities and Systems of Equations/Inequalities* - solve linear equations and inequalities, and systems of linear equations
2. *Functions* - What is a function? How can we represent functions?
3. *Linear Functions* - graph, write, manipulate, and analyze linear functions
4. *Exponents and Polynomials* - extend the previously learned laws of exponents and work with polynomials
5. *Quadratic Functions* - Solve, graph, and analyze quadratic functions, including different strategies for solving, using quadratic functions to analyze physics and business scenarios. Analyze key features of quadratic functions.
6. *Exponential Functions* - write, graph, and analyze exponential functions, including scientific and other applications
7. *One and two variable statistics* - calculating measures of center and representing data

To achieve mathematical understanding, students should be actively engaged in meaningful mathematics. The content and practice standards focus on developing students in the following areas:

- *Conceptual Understanding* – make sense of the math, reason about and understand math concepts and ideas
- *Procedural Fluency* – know mathematical facts, compute and do the math
- *Capacity* – solve a wide range of problems in various contexts by reasoning, thinking, and applying the mathematics they have learned.

As students apply their mathematical knowledge and skills to solve real-world problems, they also gain an understanding of the importance of mathematics throughout their lives.

We recognize that children develop their mathematical abilities at different ages. We are also committed to identifying materials that meet the needs of the different learning styles of individuals. Teachers use a variety of resources to match the learning styles and needs of their students when teaching a particular math concept or skill. These include materials that challenge students to deepen their mathematical thinking.

In **grade 8**, we currently use the following math resources:

1. Holt McDougal Algebra 1, Common Core Edition, 2012
ISBN-13 9780547647036

SCIENCE - 572

Standish Chiasson

The Middle School science curriculum is designed to introduce students to basic scientific disciplines such as biology, chemistry, physics and engineering, and the importance of science in their daily lives. The content is introduced through project-based and inquiry-based activities.

The Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) identify scientific and engineering practices, crosscutting concepts, and core ideas in science that all students should master in order to prepare for success in higher education and 21st-century careers. NGSS calls for more student-centered learning that enables students to think on their own, problem solve, communicate, and collaborate—in addition to learning important scientific concepts.

THE NGSS INNOVATIONS FOR SCIENCE EDUCATION

1. Three Dimensional Learning: There are three equally important, distinct dimensions to learning science included in the NGSS: Scientific and Engineering Practices, Crosscutting Concepts, and Disciplinary Core Ideas. The NGSS connects all three dimensions. To prepare students for success in college and 21st century careers, the NGSS also connects scientific principles to real-world

- situations, allowing for more engaging and relevant instruction to explore complicated topics.
2. All three dimensions build coherent learning progressions: The NGSS provide students with continued opportunities to engage in and develop a deeper understanding of each of the three dimensions of science. Building on the knowledge and skills gained from each grade—from elementary through high school—students have multiple opportunities to revisit and expand their understanding of all three dimensions by the end of high school.
 3. Science at JCDS is interdisciplinary; collaboration among educators spanning an array of subjects provides a broad scope of opportunities and experiences for students. With these academic collaborations and the addition of the Makerspace, we can further extend science learning through the use of tools and technology.

1. Expectations:

- Students will gain an understanding of the scientific thought process, which requires creativity, accurate record-keeping, analytical thinking, scientific writing and collaboration with others
- Students will find science engaging, accessible, and relevant to their lives and society as a whole

2. Each grade level will practice the following skills:

a. Inquiry Proficiency

- Posing testable questions
- Developing salient hypotheses
- Choosing variables and controls
- Choosing relevant supplies and technologies
- Recording data carefully
- Representing data in a meaningful way
- Analyzing and interpreting data
- Thinking critically about results
- Developing technical writing, presentation, and argumentation skills

b. Technical Proficiency, using various tools and techniques

c. Ability to work successfully in scientific teams

3. Assessment

Summative assessment will be based on short, regular quizzes, tests, projects, and lab skills. Rubrics will be periodically provided for students before an activity or assignment. After some activities, students will have opportunities to self-assess and assess group dynamics.

Science in 8th Grade

The 8th Grade year is an introduction to Physical Science, with an emphasis on chemistry and physics.

Scientific Method and Skills

Students will gain and practice tools for moving through the scientific processes from asking salient, testable questions to recording astute observations, writing hypotheses and using evidence to form supportable conclusions. They will begin building their curiosity and use these skills throughout the rest of their science careers.

Physical Properties of Matter

Students will begin by identifying, measuring, and calculating characteristic physical properties of matter, including states of matter, mass, volume, density, buoyancy, and solubility. They will also spend time relating these topics to things they do in their everyday lives from drinking water with ice to cooking to playing with balloons.

Chemical Properties of Matter

To understand the basis of chemical properties, students will study atomic structure, the periodic table, and the elements most important to life, environmental, and earth sciences.

We will investigate different types of molecular bonds and chemical reactions through models, lab. experiments, and food science.

Physics: Motion & Forces

Students will learn about the basics of physics from velocity and acceleration to Newton's laws of motion and gravity through tackling real world issues. Exploration will include developing and using a model to describe waves and their various interactions with other materials. We will become engineers and use critical thinking skills to evaluate how different scientific properties can be leveraged to help solve these issues. Students generate an answer surrounding these issues and based on their own interests.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION- גופני- חינוך

Laura Ball

Grades 6-8 Overview

Focus: advanced Physical skills and fitness

Key components: Organization of individual and team activity and exercise

Skills: Appropriate use of equipment and materials

By the end of eighth grade most students will be able to perform the following skills:

- Combining locomotor non-locomotor and manipulative skills to develop movement sequences and patterns both individually and with others.
 - Dribbling, catching, kicking, striking
 - Throwing while stationary and moving
 - Skills performed with dominant and non-dominant sides of one's body
 - Skills performed with force and accuracy (throwing at a target)

- Using skills during activities with a rhythmic flow and speed
- Comprehension of content
 - Understanding errors in performance
 - Applying rules and strategies to activities and games
 - Applying basic principles of training and appropriate guidelines of exercise to improve immediate and long-term physical fitness

There are additional opportunities for students to continue to build their physical stamina. Through the Middle School elective, students are able to participate in a fitness club. We have begun a Marathon Club that encourages students to participate in mile runs at school or on their own. The Century Club gives students the incentive to accomplish one hundred of a set exercise in an age-appropriate amount of time. Middle School students have the opportunity to participate as members of the girls' and boys' basketball teams.

ART- אמנות

Vered Singer

Overview

The JCDS Art Program exposes children to different mediums and art techniques. Students are encouraged to use their own creative expression through experimentation and exploration. Our primary goal is to help the students appreciate the joy of the art and the artistic process!

The foundation for art program centers on acquainting students with various classical and contemporary artists and their works*. We also integrate Jewish traditions into the art rendered and familiarize students with different artistic motifs. Consistent with JCDS's mission of providing a bilingual education, art is taught predominantly in Hebrew.

Learning Expectations

By the end of the school year, most students will develop aesthetic awareness, be able to create an aesthetic art form, develop self-expression and creativity through the arts, and feel sufficiently comfortable expressing themselves through art.

***Familiarization with different artists and their works**

Students will:

- Become familiar with different artists, their style, and their work
- Become familiar with the period in which their art was done
- Interpret and extract meaning from artistic works
- Learn the basic concepts of the artistic works through reading, observation, and discussion
- Become familiar with the use of colors and know basic art terminology

Familiarization with Different Materials and Media

Students will:

- Work with watercolor, oil pastels, tempera paints, colored pencils, charcoal, ink, crayons, and markers

- Work with different types of textured papers including, but not limited to: crepe paper, tissue paper, corrugated cardboard, construction paper, sketch paper, and newspaper
- Apply the use of different materials including, but not limited to: plaster of Paris, clay, copper, fabric, yarn, Styrofoam, and sponge
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Art and the Jewish and Israeli Holidays

Students will become familiar with common symbols of the Jewish tradition and with Jewish artistic techniques such as paper cutting, embroidery, weaving, and etching.

Artist of the Year by Class

This year, Eighth Grade students will do an in-depth study of **Henri Matisse's** life, technique, and style. We will focus on his paintings, looking carefully at motif and composition, and examine and discuss foreground and background colors chosen.